

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 09023 120926Z

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6406

S E C R E T CAIRO 9023

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG US

SUBJECT: COCA-COLA AND BOYCOTT

REF: CAIRO 8874

1. IN COURSE OF OUR TOUGH TALK OF LAST NIGHT, FAHMY EXPRESSED HIS ANNOYANCE AT WHAT HE CALLED YOUR SENDING SAM AYOUB OF COCA-COLA OUT HERE AT THIS TIME. MOREOVER, YOU HAD TOLD AYOUB TO GO DIRECTLY TO FAHMY. HIS ARRIVAL COULD NOT HAVE COME AT A MORE AWKWARD TIME. I TOLD HIM YOU WERE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR AYOUB'S ARRIVAL. WHILE I HAD NO DIRECT KNOWLEDGE, AYOUB HAD TOLD ME THAT YOU HAD INDICATED TO COCA-COLA CHAIRMAN AUSTIN THAT A VISIT TO CAIRO BY A COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE AT SOME CONVENIENT TIME MIGHT BE HELPFUL. IT WAS BOARD CHAIRMAN AUSTIN WHO INSTRUCTED HIM TO COME IMMEDIATELY. (AYOUB HIMSELF FEELS THE TIME FOR A VISIT IS NOT RIGHT.)

2. FAHMY POINTEDLY NOTED THAT THERE IS NOTHING IN ANY OF THE GOE LETTERS THAT SPECIFICALLY REFERS TO THE BOYCOTT. IF THE ISRAELIS OR WE PUBLICLY CLAIM THERE IS AN EGYPTIAN COMMITMENT ON THE BOYCOTT, HE WILL RELEASE THE PERTINENT LETTER.

3. AS HE HAD REPEATEDLY POINTED OUT, HE WILL HAVE TO
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DECIDE WHEN THE MOMENT IS RIGHT TO PERMIT AMERICAN FIRMS

NOW UNABLE TO WORK IN EGYPT TO OPEN UP HERE. GOE WILL HONOR ITS COMMITMENT TO US, BUT HE MUST ARRANGE THIS GRADUALLY AND SELECTIVELY. IN THE PRESENT ARAB UPROAR, WE SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO MOVE RIGHT NOW WILL ONLY ADD FUEL TO THE FIRE. HE HAS SENT WORD TO AYOUB THAT HE CANNOT SEE HIM THIS WEEK AND CONFIED HE WILL CONTINUE TO REFUSE TO SEE HIM.

4. I TOLD HIM WE UNDERSTAND HIS PROBLEM, BUT HE SHOULD ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR ALL OF US THAT EARLY STEPS BE TAKEN ON THIS MATTER. THIS PARTICULAR UNDERTAKING IS OF DIRECT INTEREST TO AMERICAN FIRMS AND FAILURE TO BEGIN IMPLEMENTING IT WITH REASONABLE DESPATCH WILL HURT GOE'S PULIC IMAGE IN US. REAGRDLESS OF THE PRECISE LANGUAGE OF THE PERTIENT LETTER, ALL OF US UNDERSTOOD WHAT WAS INVOLVED. FAHMY AGREED, BUT REITERATED HE MUST CHOOSE THE TIME, THE COMPANIES AND DETERMINE THE MODALITIES OF HOW TO PERMIT THEM TO OPERATE. EILTS

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